

Network Expansion Project

Progress Report

November 5, 2008

The Network Expansion project has moved from Planning into the Execution phase. A contract has been awarded to Bresnan Communications to provide Statewide Transport Services throughout the state and we continue to work with Qwest Communications to provide network services in locations where Bresnan is not the service provider; they offer services that better meet the user's needs or the cost of service is significantly less.

Bresnan Communication's solution includes a 2.5 Gigabit fiber backbone with connection points in Missoula, Helena, Bozeman and Billings. Bresnan's solution also includes a 1 Gigabit fiber route that is physically diverse from the primary route to support high availability requirements. Bresnan's 2.5 Gigabit route is scheduled to be installed, tested and placed into service by September 21, 2008.

Bresnan's solution also includes aggregation points in 15 communities throughout the state. Aggregation points include Dillon, Lewistown, Miles City, Glendive, Glasgow, Fort Benton, Cut Bank, Polson, Kalispell, Hamilton, Butte, Great Falls, Libby, Havre, and Forsyth. Bresnan is in the process of building these sites out and expects to have them completed by late November. The One exception is Libby, where they will have to construct a fiber or microwave route between Libby and Kalispell.

Circuit orders have been issued for 80 sites throughout the state that currently support both data and video services. Bresnan has conducted initial site visits to most sites and is in the process of building out their cable infrastructure or ordering services from other service providers to connect these sites to the backbone. The Network Technology Services Bureau is scheduled to begin migrating sites to the new network starting the week of November 12th. Details of the site implementation plan can be found on the Site Implementation Plan spreadsheet on the Network Expansion Project Web Page.

In the meantime, there has been a significant amount of tasks completed supporting the Network Expansion project. Fiber upgrades on the Capitol Complex have been completed, new management tools have been installed that will give us better visibility into the health of the network, and a new DMZ (security zone) has been established to separate state and non-state traffic. A new Internet Portal has also been established in Billings. This will allow us to automate failover and load balancing between the Helena and Billings Internet Portals.